

791 tion is given. The teacher makes a long cigarette of tobacco wrapped
789 in kakarelli bark and tosses it to the novice. If the latter is able to catch the cigarette between the second and third fingers (where the "muzzle" of the shooting tube is located), it is a sign that as time goes on he will be able to get into communication with any spirit at all. Also in this connection, the teacher will frequently send a spirit stone to the novice during the night. The novice must see it coming and catch it.

● 796 To make a good cassava crop, the piaiyen of the settlement calls
787 the spirit of the field, Piuku. First a toakai, or consulting room, is constructed of manicol palm (Plate 25, a). A goblet of cassiri, which must be made by a preadolescent girl, is given to the priest, and he enters the toakai while the population of the settlement gathers outside. Inside the hut, the piaiyen places the goblet in the middle of the floor and then drinks an infusion of green tobacco leaves in water, a potion which is imbibed by the piaiyen at the start of most of his religious and healing rituals. The tobacco water causes the practitioner to "speak with the spirits," that is, to have visions or hallucinations. The medicine man, squatting on the side of the hut opposite the door, then sings a chant to the Piuku, asking him to come and partake of the offering provided by the people. In this ceremony the piaiyen uses no rattle, because Piuku is not included among those spirits which are represented by spirit stones. Neither is tobacco smoke used. When the spirit arrives in the hut his presence is made known to the people outside by a low humming noise, the voice of the spirit. Thereupon all the people outside the hut speak to him individually (without formula), asking him for a good crop of cassava and imploring him to drink of the cassiri. The Piuku answers with his characteristic low humming noise, which all can hear but only the piaiyen can understand. Then there is the sound of drinking, and shortly afterwards the piaiyen emerges from the hut holding the goblet in his hand for the inspection of the populace. The contents of the goblet are clear like water and are icy cold, indicating that Piuku has drunk the essence of the brew. Then the piaiyen goes back into the hut and sings a song, thanking the spirit and telling him now to go back to the field, from which he has come for the occasion. After this the piaiyen emerges from the hut a second time and informs the people as to whether the spirit's answer to their

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pleas was favorable or unfavorable, in other words, whether there will be a good or a poor crop that year. It is said that the prognostications of the piaiyen are remarkably accurate. Following this ceremony a drinking spree takes place.

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The precise songs which are sung in this and other ceremonies I was unable to obtain because it was impossible to find a piaiyen who spoke English of any description. Using laymen as interpreters, I was blocked because of the secrecy which guards the proprietary interest which a piaiyen has in his incantations. It was claimed by all piaiyen, however, that the songs which each practitioner uses are peculiar to him alone. As he becomes established he invents songs and incantations of his own, or has them revealed to him by the spirits while he is in a trance induced by tobacco. By the process of trial and error, those songs which are efficacious in calling the spirits are retained in the individual piaiyen's repertoire. Medicine men say that when they wish to learn more about the spirits, to establish contact with spirits which are strangers to them, they retire to their consultation rooms or palmleaf huts, drink the usual infusion of tobacco water, smoke a cigarette, and soon the spirits may come and talk to them. During the hallucination they will discover themselves singing songs which they must remember to use on subsequent occasions when they wish to consult the spirits in question.

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Contrary to the usages of medicine men in certain other Guiana tribes,¹ the piaiyen of the Barama do not use dolls or elaborately carved benches in the practice of their art.² Each piaiyen does use a bench, which is reserved for ceremonial purposes in the exercise of his duties, but these benches, which I have seen in use by the piaiyen at religious observances, belong to the general type used by laymen as pieces of house furniture. If my information is correct, the rattle, with its enclosed spirit stones, tobacco, herbs, and a bench are the sole ceremonial accessories used by medicine men.

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In addition to the cassava ceremony, the piaiyen conducts a ceremony, the details of which I was unable to learn, at times when

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¹ Roth, 1915, *Animism and Folk Lore*, p. 329.

² After a month of close relationship with David, the medicine man of Sawari, I was unable to break down his "story" to this effect. Finally remaining unconvinced, I resorted to the slightly unethical expedient of opening, in his absence, the basket where he stored his paraphernalia. Here was found his rattle with enclosed stones, tobacco, a number of dried leaves (presumably herbs used in curing), but no manikin or doll.

- 796 fishing is difficult. It is said that this ceremony also consists of
791 calling a spirit and making a sacrifice. Hunting difficulties are ameliorated by the piaiyen on an individual basis by curing bina trouble, which will be described shortly.
- 757 **Medicine.** Beside the cassava and fish ceremony it is said that the medicine man conducts no public ceremonials, the remainder of his activities being confined to services which he renders on request and payment by individuals. In the latter capacity he fulfills functions analogous to those of a physician. Among the matters in which his services are sought are prevention of infertility, prevention of conception, and curing of the following ailments: fever, headache, sores and ulcers, eye trouble, and, in some cases, stomach and respiratory troubles. All internal and organic complaints, however, are difficult for the piaiyen to treat. The piaiyen also acts as a diviner in cases where sickness is due to action by another piaiyen. (See section on Crime and Punishment.)
- 753 Practically all sickness, including reproductive maladjustment, is due to intervention by spirits. But only serious cases of illness are cured by medicine men. A large number of medicines concocted from materials in the bush are in use by laymen for self-treatment. There are also a number of older women who are noted for their knowledge of curing methods and who constitute a group of minor healers, who are consulted by laymen, usually before or, sometimes, coincidentally with treatment by a piaiyen. The use of material medicines is not inconsistent in Carib thought with the theory that disease is due to spiritual causes. It is believed that the application of medicine to a wound, for instance, is so unpleasant to the spirit which has caused the wound that it ceases its interference. The use of internal medicine acts in the same way, causing the interfering spirits to cease persecuting the patient. Cathartic pills and salts, for instance, are believed to loosen the grip which spirits have taken on the bowels. A partial list of native material substances and cures used in Carib lay-medicine follows.
- 757 *ara uri*, remedy for headache. Scrape bark, then wrap the bark in
278 any kind of leaf and soak it in water four to five days; then wash the entire head, including the hair, with the solution.
- parawakasi* (trysle, *Pentaclethra*), remedy for open cuts and sores; a dicotyledenous plant. The two halves of the old seed remain